

BASIS STATEMENT

The proposed testing requirements changes to Chapter 13 stem from the regular regeneration (revision) process employed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). Each Praxis exam undergoes regeneration every five years. ETS conducts a multi-state standard setting study designed to assemble two separate groups of current practitioners for two to three days to review the validity and reliability of the test being regenerated. The end result is a recommended cut off score that is deemed appropriate for the just qualified candidate (JQC). Several of the tests required by the Maine Department of Education were recently regenerated, so the current Chapter 13 must be updated to reflect these changes.

Proposed changes in Chapter 13 include new test codes, new test titles, recommended cut off scores, and language to allow old tests no longer being administered to be used for up to five years after which time only the new tests will be accepted.

With respect to Section 3.10 of the rule, the proposed revision came to mind during the running of the first comment period. The inequity of the provision was recognized as of sufficient importance to address during this rule-making process.

The section waives the PLT and Praxis I tests for “applicants who hold a current teaching certificate from another state who are seeking a teaching certificate in the same endorsement area.” The practice has been to tell an applicant with a lapsed credential that if they renew their lapsed credential from out of state they can avoid taking the tests.

As can be seen, it is the fact of having held a full teaching credential, not whether the applicant has ever taken the PLT or the Praxis I that determines whether the applicant has the basic knowledge that is required to obtain a teaching credential. Accordingly, it is excessive to require PLT and Praxis I when the teaching credential is lapsed because passing the PLT and Praxis I test will not enable a teacher to renew the lapsed credential. The Praxis I test is to assess whether a person has sufficient high school level knowledge to be able to become a teacher, and PLT is a basic methods and pedagogy test to assess the knowledge of a beginning teacher. All teachers must pass a specific content methods course to have a full credential in a particular endorsement area.

By the same logic, an applicant who has held a full teaching credential in any endorsement area should not be required to take these basic tests since the tests do not show or advance the knowledge needed for any specific subject area teaching credential.

In-state applicants and out-of-state applicants have been treated equally regarding the need to take PLT and Praxis I. No rule made that explicit until this proposed revision.

Not all Educational Specialists credential areas are required to take the PLT, such as School Nurse, Athletic Director, School Psychologists and Vocational Education Evaluator. The PLT will be required for these specialists when applying for a specialty area that requires the PLT.